

NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

Conference Call Summary Monday, September 19, 2011 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time

Participants

Ted Coopwood

Tribal Science Council Agency Co-Chair
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Children's Health Protection and
Environmental Education
Phone: (202) 564-2197
E-mail: coopwood.theodore@epa.gov

Monica Rodia

Tribal Science Council Executive Secretary
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
Phone: (202) 564-8322
E-mail: rodia.monica@epa.gov

Ken Bailey

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Science Policy
Phone: (513) 569-7841
E-mail: bailey.ken@epa.gov

Felicia Barnett

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 4
Phone: (404) 562-8659
E-mail: barnett.felicia@epa.gov

Sirirat (Tia) Chullakorn

Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts
Point Rancheria (Region 9)
Phone: (707) 591-0580, ext. 113
E-mail: u2sc@yahoo.com

Mike Durglo

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the
Flathead Reservation (Region 8)
Phone: (406) 883-2888
E-mail: miked@cskt.org

Nigel Fields

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
Phone: 202.564.3405
E-mail: fields.nigel@epa.gov

Brenda Groskinsky

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 7
Phone: (913) 551-7188
E-mail: groskinsky.brenda@epa.gov

Luke Jones

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
American Indian Environmental Office
Phone: (202) 564-4013
E-mail: jones.luke@epa.gov

Robert (Bob) Hall

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
Phone: (415) 947-4123
E-mail: hall.robertk@epa.gov

Glynis Hill

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Policy
Phone: (202) 564-1139
E-mail: hill.glynis@epa.gov

Bart Hoskins

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development (On Detail)
Phone: (202) 564-3298
E-mail: hoskins.bart@epa.gov

Denise Jensen

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska (Region 7)
Phone: (402) 878-4060
E-mail: winnewater@huntel.net

Dan Kusnierz

Penobscot Nation (Region 1)
Telephone: (207) 817-7361
E-mail: pinwater@penobscotnation.org

David LaRoche

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Air and Radiation
Phone: (202) 564-3926
E-mail: laroche.david@epa.gov

James Leathers

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 6
Phone: (214) 665-6569
E-mail: leathers.james@epa.gov

Allison Martin

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development Intern
Phone: (202) 564-0845
E-mail: martin.allison@epa.gov

Kathleen (Kathy) Mayo

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
Phone: (312) 353-5592
E-mail: mayo.kathleen@epa.gov

Eloise (Ella) Mulford

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
Phone: (312) 353-2022
E-mail: mulford.eloise@epa.gov

Curtis Munoz

Kiowa Tribe (Region 6)
Phone: (580) 654-1975
E-mail: nethkuplega@yahoo.com

Neil Patterson

Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force
Community
Phone: (518) 358-4286
E-mail: npatterson@hetf.org

Katie Renwick

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Phone: (828) 497-1832
E-mail: katerenw@nc-chokeee.com

Caren Robinson

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution
Prevention
Phone: (202) 564-0544
E-mail: robinson.caren@epa.gov

Kai Tang

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
Phone: (732) 321-4364
E-mail: tang.kai@epa.gov

Kelly Wright

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Region 10)
Phone: (208) 478-3903
E-mail: kwright@shoshonebannocktribes.com

Contractor Support

Kristen LeBaron

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.
Phone: (301) 670-4990
E-mail: klebaron@scgcorp.com

Roll Call/Introductions

Monica Rodia, Executive Secretary of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC), welcomed the members to the teleconference and took roll. Monica announced that Ella Mulford is stepping down as the principal representative from EPA Region 5 and will be replaced by Kathleen Mayo. Monica and Ted thanked Ella for her long years of service and passion and wished her success in her future endeavors. Ella shared that her years on the TSC were rewarding, but she wanted to provide the opportunity for someone else to serve. Kathleen is a biologist who has worked with tribes in regions 5 and 9. She is a citizen of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

August Teleconference Minutes

Monica reported that the August conference call minutes had been reviewed, finalized and distributed to the members. She recommended that those members unable to attend the monthly teleconferences read the minutes to stay informed about current TSC activities.

Tribal Caucus Reports

Katie Renwick reported that she attended the Region 4 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) meeting and gave a presentation on the implementation of the Tribal Science Priorities. Katie stated she did not receive as much feedback, but she has developed notes that include some feedback from the Region 4 tribes and several national tribal committees she serves on. She reported that the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community in Washington State developed a Swinomish Climate Change Initiative in 2010; Katie thought that it would be beneficial for more of the tribes to develop and implement similar initiatives, especially as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) was used to develop the initiative. Katie will send her notes to Monica, including appropriate website links. She noted that the Region 4 tribes had questions regarding the next steps in the TSP process. Katie explained to them that their feedback was needed for the next step, which is implementation in Indian Country. Most of the feedback that she received involved requests for additional funding.

Ella attended the Second Annual Pacific Northwest Climate Science Conference in Seattle, Washington, at the University of Washington the previous week, and she will forward a summary to Monica. Ella provided information about the TSC to the group that met, which included EPA, U.S. Geological Survey, and other federal agencies. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) sponsored the meeting in support of its desire to develop a national climate change plan. Mike Durglo also attended the conference and the Workshop on Exploring Traditional Ecological Knowledge's Role in Responding and Adapting to Climate Change and Variability (TEK Workshop), which was held following the Climate Science Conference at the Seattle Public Library. The Climate Science Conference did not include a discussion of TEK, but several individuals who had attended the Climate Science Conference discussed the implementation of TEK at the TEK Workshop, including a discussion of next steps. Mike met with several BIA staff members during the conference. He submitted a grant proposal to BIA, which has established grants to help the tribes with vulnerability assessment and action plans. Ella reported that BIA had received more than \$3 million worth of proposals but only had \$315,000 available to award. BIA understands that there is a greater need for funding. In response to a question from Ted Coopwood, Mike reported that the discussion focused on how different agencies and tribes can collaborate to implement TEK.

Mike commented that the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) has a committee devoted to natural resources. It might be helpful for Region 10 TSC members to contact ATNI members to be placed on the agenda of the next ATNI meeting. Mike also will develop a summary about his experience at the workshop and forward it to Monica. Ella added that a breakout session was held at the conference to

discuss incorporation of TEK and the next steps. Her breakout group discussed the fact that many of the tribal needs in relation to climate change do not involve TEK, particularly as some of the information cannot be provided to nontribal members. The group identified climate change-related needs such as funding and critical subsistence and lifestyle issues. Tribal members in the breakout group stated that their needs do not involve TEK, particularly given the various protocols that different tribes employ regarding management of their information. Ted thought that it would be a challenge to determine how TEK factors into existing programs and activities on tribal lands, so the TSC will need to continue listening, learning and being available to ensure that the Council makes a difference.

Implementation of National TSPs

Ted said that EPA representatives are working along with senior managers to determine opportunities within the program and regional offices offer the best possible way to incorporate the TSPs. We want to identify the right locations in the right manner so that these efforts translate into practical ways for the priorities to be operational in tribal communities. The TSC will work with and through the Indian Program Policy Council and the American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) to accomplish this. Ted stated the Office of Children's Health will address the TSPs by developing a climate change curriculum within boys and girls clubs on tribal lands. In addition, AEIO has launched the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program at eight tribal colleges and universities (TCUs). Professors at these TCUs have submitted a variety of proposals addressing climate change, air quality, hydrofracking etc. Ted explained there is opportunity for the TSC to partner with the TSUs. He encouraged the Tribal Caucus to be involved with this effort to ensure that the Council is represented on workgroups and lend their expertise to enhance curricula.

Guidebook for Building Tribal Environmental Capacity: A Framework for Managing Indian General Assistance Program Grants

Monica introduced Luke Jones, who explained that a consultation period is being held to engage in dialogue about the General Assistance Program (GAP) grants program, which is the largest and arguably most important resource from EPA to the tribes. Program management wants to ensure that it continues to manage the GAP grant program well. The program is trying to satisfy several imposed requirements, one of which is to be responsive to an audit of the program by EPA's Office of Inspector General (OIG). OIG found opportunities to improve the management and oversight of the grants program. The GAP grants program would like to remove any perception that the program has weaknesses and, instead, is well-positioned to demonstrate clearly that it is making progress in its partnership with the tribes. OIG acknowledged that the partnership is beneficial but asked the program to develop metrics that measure successes. The program will demonstrate funds accountability, a continuing process that all federal programs engage in to consistently improve. By providing clarity on how progress will be measured, the GAP grants program will enhance its ability to protect environmental resources well into the future. The comment period on the draft guidance document will end on November 30, 2011. After November 30, the GAP grants program will seriously consider the comments and be thoughtful and responsive. It is unlikely that the program will produce a public document cataloging each individual comment. Instead, it will develop a document that responds to the major issues raised (i.e., cluster comments into themes); this will be a more effective manner by which to address the comments. The draft guidance document will be revised in response to the comments.

Ted asked about the final product of the effort. Luke explained that the final product would be new guidance for the GAP grants program, which will include the guidebook.

Mike asked whether the OIG audit report was available online. Luke stated that it was, and Monica had provided a link to the OIG report in the reminder e-mail for this teleconference. Mike asked about the

results of the audit. Luke responded that OIG had found that a great deal of work had been funded by the GAP program, which is a foundation that enables the tribes to develop tribal environmental programs. The audit was of EPA's management of the program rather than tribal outcomes. Mike noted that it is necessary to determine whether the goals of the tribes are being achieved. Luke said that other tribes have discussed this same issue. OIG did not say that the tribes are not making progress; OIG's conclusion was that the Agency has not developed a means to measure this progress in a national, consistent manner. The GAP grants program must identify which indicators can be applied broadly across tribes and regions; the metrics cannot be all encompassing.

Monica asked about the results of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) process. Luke explained that the GAP grants program went through the PART process twice; the first time, GAP scored the highest of any Agency program, and following the second process, GAP received the second highest score within the Office of Water. Monica asked how GAP was measured by the PART process in terms of performance. Luke explained that the GAP grants program scores well in the PART process because it has developed effective tools. GAP has national, web-based data systems in place to track tribal achievements within the program. The program's online management tool also increases its PART scores. GAP is the only Agency grants program that utilizes an online management tool for its grant work plans. Ella added that OMB and OIG measured two different aspects of the program.

Glynis Hill asked whether the guidance will be used as a decision-making tool. Ella explained that the guidance is going to be revised, and the guidebook is an addendum to the guidance. Luke added that the guidance will include the revised guidebook, and the previous guidance will be retired.

Denise Jensen asked whether there was a workgroup established to revise the guidebook and guidance. Luke responded that a wide range of workgroups within headquarters and the regions had been involved, but a specific workgroup had not been established.

Tia Chullakorn asked whether the program would consult the tribes prior to the guidebook being published. Luke responded that a draft guidebook had been released for the specific purpose of obtaining tribal input. Nothing has been developed without tribal involvement. Tia asked whether the guidebook would address only GAP or whether it included other tribal programs (e.g., air, water). Luke responded that the guidebook only will pertain to the GAP grants program and will not set any policy for other EPA grants programs.

Mike asked whether the GAP grants program's concept of consultation differed from the Agency's, which often was not true consultation. Consultation should include tribal input from the beginning of the process. Luke agreed that it was necessary for the Agency to include the tribes and respond to the findings of the audit report. Senior leaders within the Office of International and Tribal Affairs only recently realized the need to remove the GAP program from a list of potential Agency weaknesses identified by OIG, particularly as a result of the current budget situation. GAP was required to increase its efforts to be removed from the list by the end of Fiscal Year 2011.

Monica encouraged the TSC members to provide any comments about this issue using the link that they received in the conference call reminder e-mail.

Announcements

Monica announced that the fall meeting would be held the week of December 5, 2011, in conjunction with the National Tribal Caucus (NTC). The Cherokee Nation is hosting the meeting at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Monica will e-mail the TSC members the logistical information for the meeting. Ted added that the TSC will work with Clay Bravo and the NTC to develop the agenda for

the meeting. He and Monica would appreciate suggestions, particularly from the Tribal Caucus, regarding ideas and topics for the joint session. Monica will contact Curtis Munoz about the possibility of working with the tribes in Region 6 on a demonstration of the Tribal-Focused Environmental, Risk and Sustainability Tool (T-FERST).

Monica congratulated James Leathers on the birth of his daughter, Eliana Grace, on September 13, 2011.

Caren Robinson explained that the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) recently held two consultations on the OCSPP draft tribal strategic plan. The office has received input from and communicated with the tribes involved with OCSPP and the EPA Tribal Pesticide Program Council. Approximately 30 tribal participants attended the consultation sessions, and they requested additional time to provide tribal comments, so the office extended the comment period to November 4, 2011. The strategic plan will be extended to 2016 rather than 2015 as originally planned. The area of the strategic plan that overlaps with the TSC is located in Goal 4, which focuses on better utilizing data to identify priorities; T-FERST and other models are discussed in the strategic plan. Input from TSC members about the strategic plan is encouraged. Caren will send a copy of the draft strategic plan to Monica to forward to the TSC members.

Monica and Ted thanked the members for participating and adjourned the conference call at 3:13 p.m.

Action Items

- ✧ Katie will e-mail her notes about the Region 4 RTOC meeting to Monica, including appropriate website links.
- ✧ Ella will e-mail her notes from the climate change meeting to Monica.
- ✧ Mike will e-mail his notes from the climate change and TEK meetings to Monica.
- ✧ Monica will e-mail the fall meeting logistical information to the TSC members within the next week.
- ✧ Caren will e-mail a copy of the OCSPP draft strategic plan to Monica to forward to the TSC members.

**NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL
CONFERENCE CALL
SEPTEMBER 19, 2011
2:00 PM - 3:00 P.M. EASTERN STANDARD TIME**

Call-in Number: **866-299-3188**
Access Code: **2025648322#**

FINAL AGENDA

- 2:00 – 2:05 Roll Call/Introduction of new representatives
- 2:05 – 2:10 August minutes distributed for review and finalized
- 2:10 – 2:20 Tribal Caucus reports
 - Regional Tribal Operations Committee and tribal meeting updates (Jeff Mears)
- 2:20 – 2:30 Implementation of National Tribal Science Priorities
 - TSC involvement in Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program
 - Children’s Health and Climate Change
- 2:30 – 2:35 Tribal Science Council Fall Business Meeting
 - Co-locate meeting with National Tribal Caucus (joint session)
 - Cherokee Nation in Tulsa, OK is hosting the week of December 5, 2011
- 2:35 – 2:55 Guidebook for Building Tribal Environmental Capacity: A Framework for Managing Indian General Assistance Program Grants (Luke Jones, AIEO)
- 2:55 – 3:00 Announcement(s)
 - Tribal Consultation on EPA’s Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention’s (OCSPP) Tribal Strategic Plan
 - Hosted by OCSPP on September 13 and September 14
 - Comments on draft strategic plan may be provided to Caren Robinson, Tribal Program Manager, at robinson.caren@epa.gov
 - Document can be viewed at <http://www.epa.gov/tribal/pdf/2011-0727-tribal-plan-final-consultation.pdf>
 - Baby news! Congratulations to James Leathers (EPA Region 6) on the arrival of Eliana Grace on September 13.

Next conference call—***October 17, 2011, from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. EDT***